

Serial No. 10/767,677
Atty. Doc. No. 2002P06700US

REMARKS

Applicants have amended claims 1, 9 - 11, 17, and 19 and added new claims 21 and 22. Thus, claims 1 - 22 are presented for examination. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Response to Objections to Claim 17:

The Examiner rejected to claim 17 for containing informalities. Applicants have amended claim 17 as suggested by Examiner. Applicants therefore respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to claim 17.

Response to rejections under Section 112:

The Examiner has rejected claims 8 - 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants respectfully believe that the Examiner intended to object to claims 9 – 20 and submits the following response to claims 9 – 20. If Examiner also rejects claim 8 based on Section 112, Applicants respectfully request that Examiner specify the portion of claim 8 that does not comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Applicants have amended claims 9, 10 – 11, and 19 as suggested by Examiner. Applicants therefore respectfully request withdrawal of the Section 112 rejection.

Response to rejections under Section 102:

Claims 1, 3 - 17, 19, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), the Examiner contending that these claims are anticipated by Putz (DE 198 09 568 A1). Claims 1, 3 - 17, 19, and 20 also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), the Examiner contending that these claims are anticipated by Maclin (USPN 4,480,436).

Putz discloses an annular combustion chamber having an outer wall and an inner wall, with the inner wall comprising a plurality of wall elements abutting each other at a horizontal joint and connected to each other at the horizontal joint by a plurality of screw connections oriented perpendicular to the horizontal joint (see e.g. Putz specification, Figure 1). Likewise, Maclin discloses an annular combustion chamber having an outer wall and an inner wall, with the inner wall comprising a plurality of wall elements abutting each other at a horizontal joint and

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connected to each other at the horizontal joint by a plurality of screw connections oriented perpendicular to the horizontal joint (see e.g. Maclin specification, Figures 2 and 3).

In contrast, Applicants' claimed invention is a combustion chamber with the wall elements connected to each other in the area of the parting joint by a plurality of screw connections oriented at a non-perpendicular angle to the inner wall surface and the horizontal parting joint (see e.g. Applicants' specification, page 4 lines 25 – 30 and Figure 4). Applicants' non-perpendicular orientation of the screw connection is not a matter of mere design choice but facilitates assembly and disassembly of the support structure elements while at the same time providing a sufficient vertical force to secure the support structure elements (see e.g. Applicants' specification, page 5 lines 8 – 21).

In view of the above, independent claims 1 and 9 are patentable. Dependent claims 2 – 8 and 10 - 22 are also patentable at least based on their dependency from claims 1 and 9 respectively, as well as based on their own merit.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the Section 102 rejection.

Response to rejections under Section 103:

Claims 2, 4, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), the Examiner contending that these claims are obvious in view of either Matyscak (USPN 5,387,082) or Wakeman et al. (USPN 4,555,901).

In view of the remarks in connection with the Section 102 rejection, Applicants respectfully submit that Matyscak or Wakeman alone or in combination do not teach or suggest the claimed invention. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the Section 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

Discussion of New Claims 21 and 22:

New claims 21 - 22 further define the scope of the invention, as described in the specification and drawings and are patentable based on their dependency from the independent claims as well as on their own merit. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 21 - 22 are patentable and respectfully request allowance of claims 21 - 22.

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Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection set forth in the outstanding Office Action are inapplicable to the present claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the objections and rejections and timely pass the application to allowance. Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this paper. The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees due in connection with this paper, or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-2179.

Respectfully submitted,

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